

Remarks

Claims 3 and 5-24 are pending in the present application. Claims 5, 7, 9, 18, 21, and 24 have been amended. Claims 19 and 20 have been canceled and no claims have been added. Therefore, claims 3, 5-18, and 21-24 are now pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Examiner Chawan is sincerely thanked for indicating that claims 3, 6-17, and 20-22 contain allowable subject matter.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 22-24¹ are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for indefiniteness. The Office Action asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitations in these claims. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Antecedent basis is about ensuring that items preceded by the words “the” and “said” have been previously introduced. Claim 22 recites a machine-readable storage medium storing executable code and configured to cause a machine to perform the method as claimed in claim 3. (Emphasis added.) The only use of the word “the” appears before “method as claimed in claim 3,” which had already been properly introduced in claim 3.

Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 5, 18, 19, 23, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,581,633 to Hotta et al. (hereinafter “Hotta”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,108,206 to Yoshida (hereinafter “Yoshida”). Applicant disagrees with these

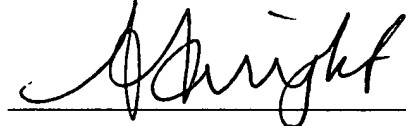
¹ The Office Action states that only claims 23-24 are rejected under 112, but then makes a reference to the recitations of claim 22.

rejections. However, because this is the third nonfinal Office Action, for the sole purpose of expediting allowance of the present application, Applicant has amended claims 5 and 18 to incorporate features indicated as allowable by the Office Action.

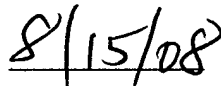
Claim 5 has been amended to recite that "at least one of a) and b) is true," where a) substantially comprises the features of allowable claim 7 and b) substantially comprises the features of allowable claim 9. Therefore, claim 5, and all claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable over the cited prior art. Claim 18 has been amended to include recitations from claim 19 and allowable claim 20. Therefore, claim 18, and all claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable over the cited prior art. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes that all outstanding issues have been resolved, and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If Examiner Chawan believes that a telephone conference will further prosecution of the present case, please contact Applicant at the number indicated below.

Respectfully,



Andrew F. Knight, Applicant



Date

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